



BAJI RAO 1

THE WARRIOR PESHWA

Vol 729





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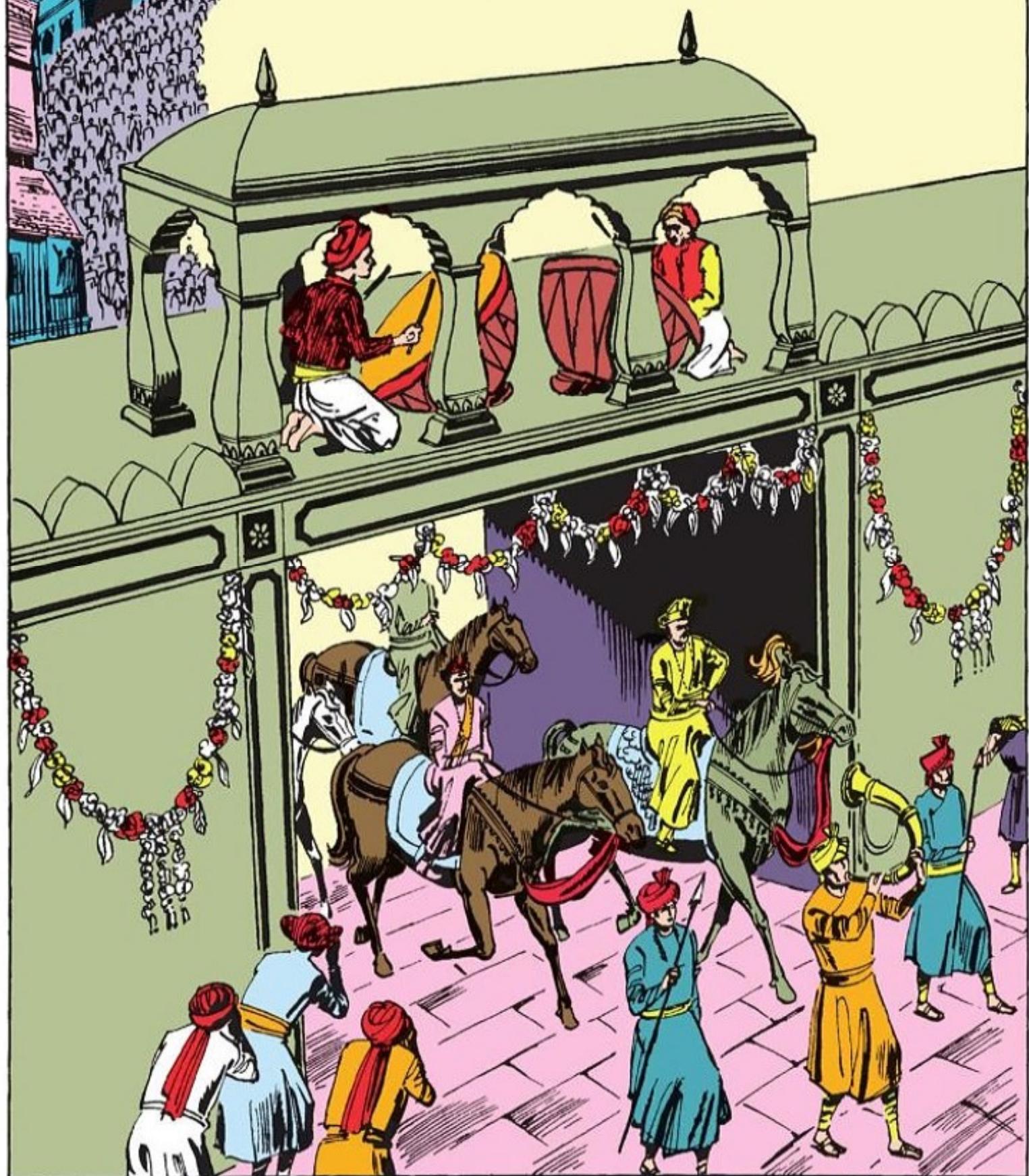
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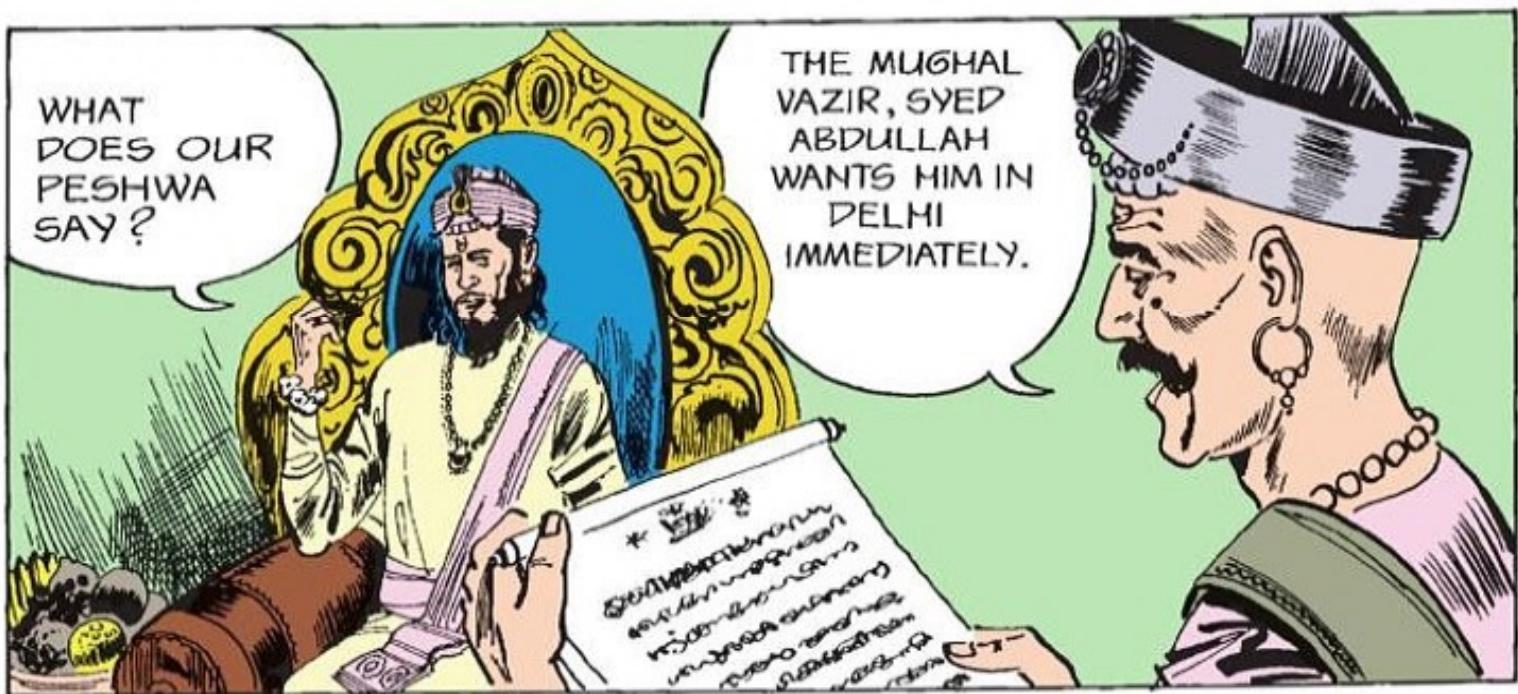
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BAJI RAO-I



IN 1718, BALAJI VISHWANATH, THE PESHWA OR PRIME MINISTER OF THE MARATHAS, WAS A POWER TO RECKON WITH.
HIS YOUNG SON BAJI RAO WAS IMBUED WITH THE MARTIAL SPIRIT.

THEIR MASTER SHAHU, THE GREAT SHIVAJI'S GRANDSON, RULED FROM SATARA, THE MARATHA CAPITAL.



IN DELHI, INTRIGUE AND VIOLENCE WERE RAMPANT. EMPEROR FARRUKH SIYAR, JEALOUS OF THE POWER OF THE SYED BROTHERS, WAS PLOTTING AGAINST THEM.



THE NIZAM WAS THE EMPEROR'S LEADING SUBEDAR OR GOVERNOR.



THEY HAVE ON
THEIR SIDE, MIGHTY
WARRIOR'S LIKE
THE PESHWA.

THAT
MARATHA RAT!
I HAVE THE TRAP
FOR HIM.

MEANWHILE, PESHWA BALAJI VISHWANATH ACCCOMPANIED BY HIS
BRILLIANT SON BAUJI RAO...



...AND LEADING AN ARMY OF FIFTEEN THOUSAND, HAD REACHED
THE OUTSKIRTS OF DELHI.



SUDDENLY...

"THE MAN IN THE PALANQUIN
MUST BE THE PESHWA!"

KILL
HIM!

THE SOLDIERS HOWEVER WERE MISTAKEN.

WE HAVE HAD A NARROW ESCAPE,
FATHER. THEY SEEM TO BE
THE NIZAM'S MEN.

I'LL HAVE TO
TALK
TO THE
EMPEROR.

THEN WITH THE HELP OF BALAJI VISHWANATH, THE SYED BROTHERS
SOON SUCCEEDED IN DEPOSING THE FEEBLE MONARCH.

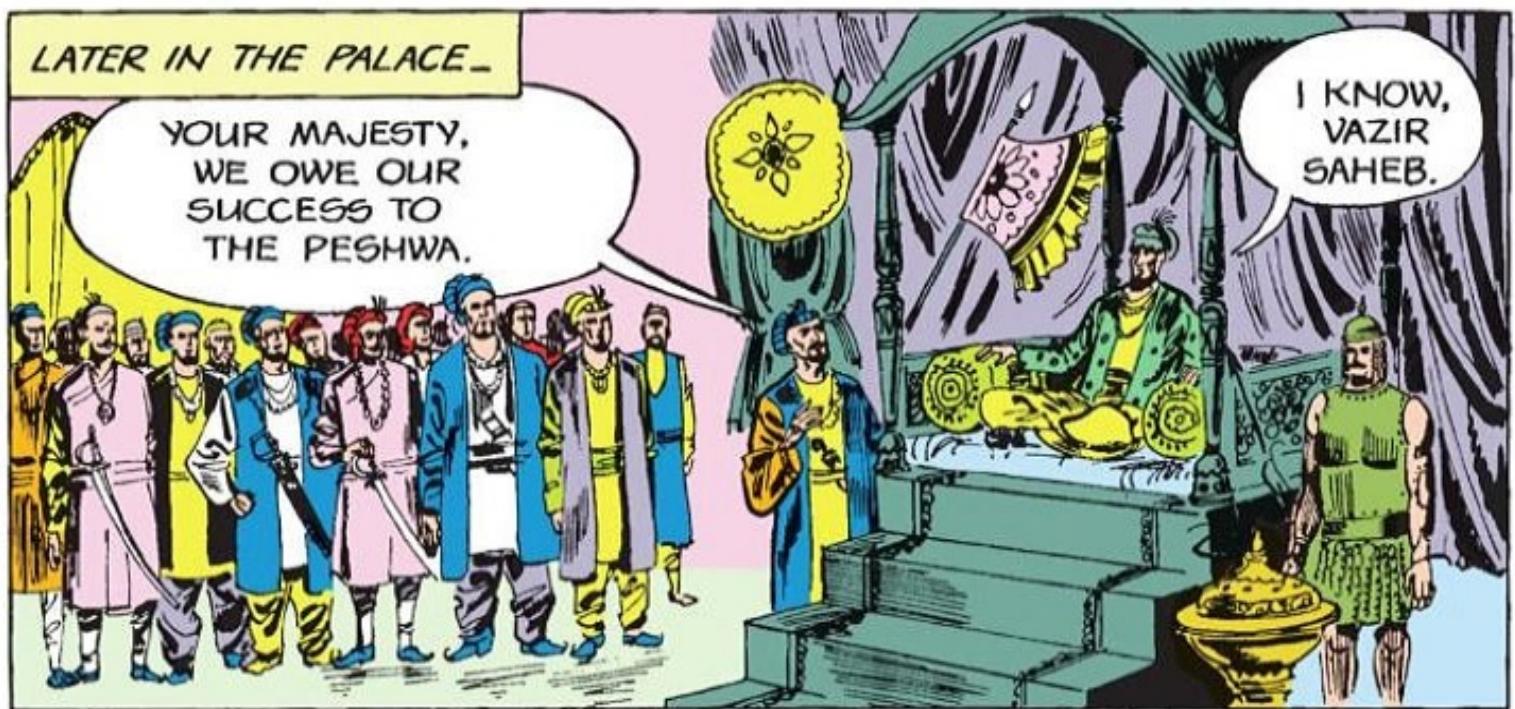
DELHI HAS
A NEW
EMPEROR
AGAIN.

LONG
LIVE
THE
EMPEROR!

LATER IN THE PALACE—

YOUR MAJESTY,
WE OWE OUR
SUCCESS TO
THE PESHWA.

I KNOW,
VAZIR
SAHEB.



THE NEW EMPEROR WAS A PUPPET IN THE HANDS OF HIS VAZIR,
SYED ABDULLAH.

YOUR MAJESTY CAN NOW
ASK THE SUBEDARS
TO DISPERSE. SEND
THE NIZAM TO
MALWA.

I WILL...
I WILL.



THE PESHWA MUST
BE PAID. I'VE
ALREADY PROMISED
HIM THE *CHOUTHAI
OF SIX SUBAS,
SIRE!

IT
SHALL BE
DONE.



ANYTHING ELSE?

WE MUST RELEASE CHHATRAPATI SHAHU'S MOTHER, WHO'S STILL A CAPTIVE IN THE PALACE.

RELUCTANTLY THE EMPEROR SIGNED THE PAPERS.

YOU DID IMPRESS THEM, FATHER!

MAYBE, SON. BUT I'VE HURT SOME QUARTERS AND WE'LL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL.

THE NIZAM GAVE A BANQUET IN HONOUR OF THE PESHWA. LATER—

MY APOLOGIES, YOUR EXCELLENCY. I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED THAT DAY.

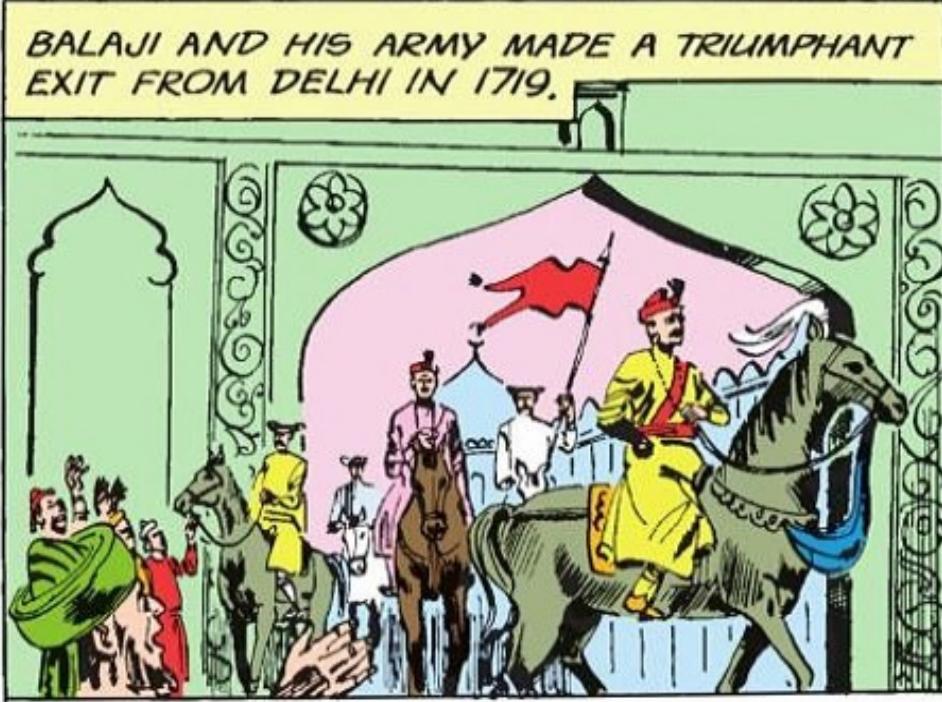
I BELIEVE YOU.

I ENVY YOUR DIPLOMACY, SIR!

AND I CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR NEW APPOINTMENT IN MALWA.

WE SHALL
MISS YOU.

BALAJI AND HIS ARMY MADE A TRIUMPHANT
EXIT FROM DELHI IN 1719.



THE NIZAM
INWARDLY
HATES US,
FATHER.

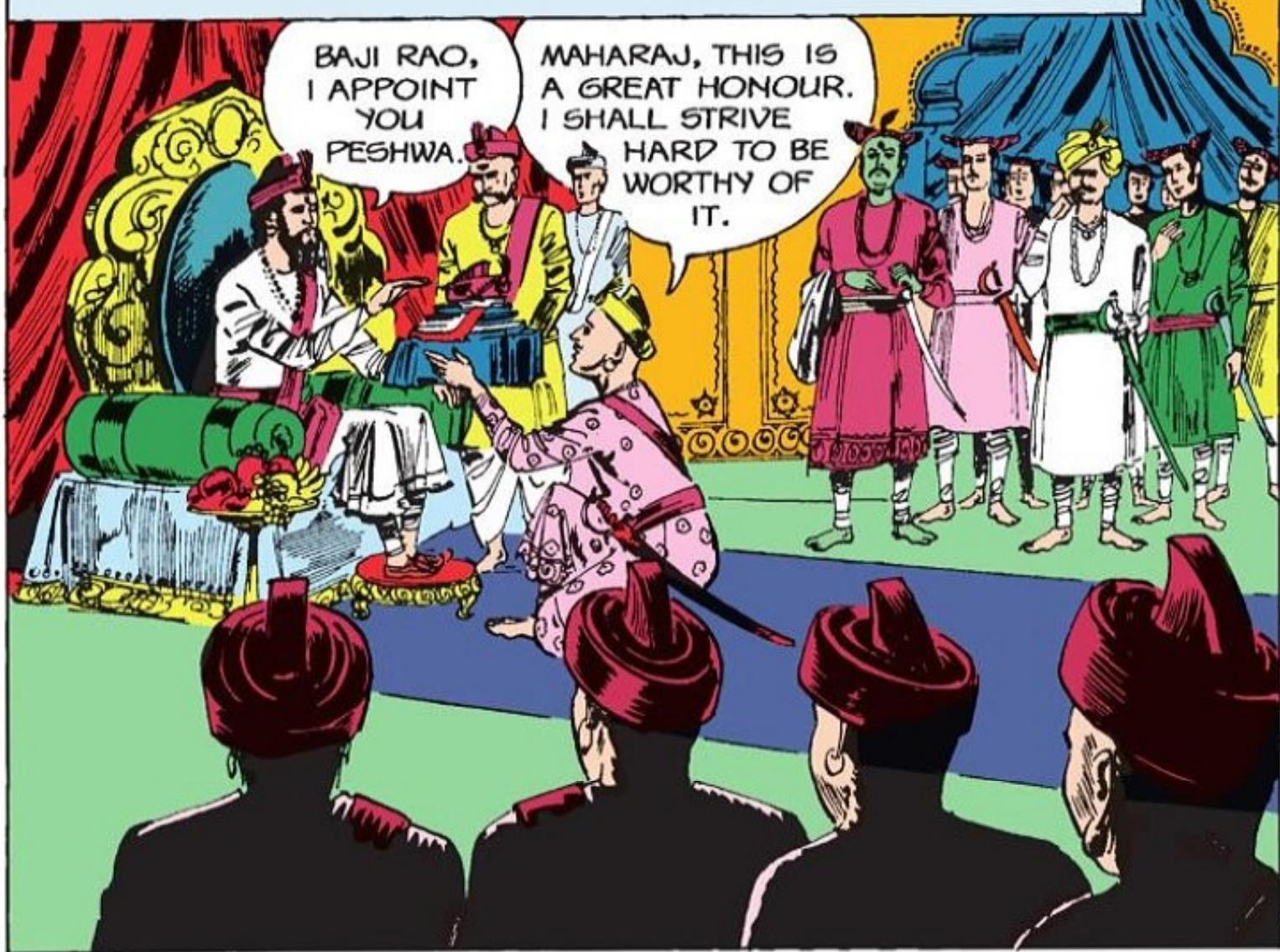
YES. SOME DAY
YOU WILL
HAVE TO
FIGHT
HIM.



AT SATARA, SHAHU GAVE A ROYAL WELCOME TO THE
VICTORIOUS PESHWA.

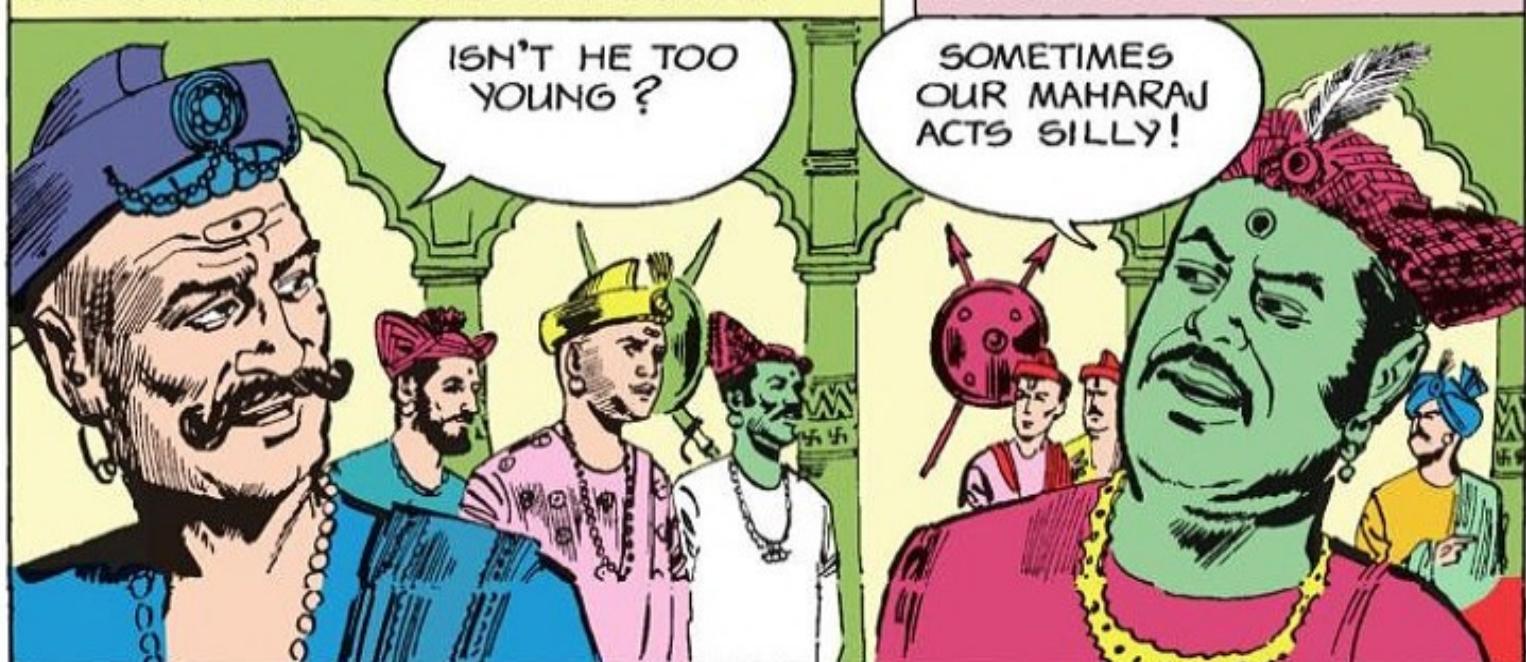


BALAJI DIED AFTER HIS RETURN FROM DELHI AND BAJI RAO WAS SUMMONED BY SHAHU.



BAJI RAO WAS JUST TWENTY YEARS OLD THEN. MANY IN SHAHU'S COURT ENVIED HIM. ONE OF THEM WAS THE PRATINIDHI, AN ELDER STATESMAN.

TRIMBAKRAO DABHADE, SON OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE MARATHA ARMY, WAS ANOTHER.



BAJI RAO WAS BRAVE AND AMBITIOUS. MANY YOUNG MARATHA WARRIORSGREW TO RESPECT HIM. SHINDE AND HOLKAR, THE TWO NEWLY-CREATED SARDARS, WERE HIS TRUSTED LIEUTENANTS.

HOLKAR, THIS I BELIEVE... WE CAN BECOME THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE IN THE COUNTRY.

SHRIMANT, OUR KINGDOM IS SMALL. THE NIZAM, A SARDAR OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE HAS A MIGHTIER ARMY.

* THE PROSPEROUS ONE. THE TITLE BY WHICH THE PESHWAS WERE ADDRESSED.

BUT THE TREE OF THE BIG IMPERIAL POWER IS ROTTEN... IF WE STRIKE AT ITS ROOTS THE BRANCHES WILL FALL BY THEMSELVES.

HOLKAR AND I ARE PREPARED TO LAY DOWN OUR VERY LIVES FOR YOU, SHRIMANT!

AT THE COURT OF SATARA, BAJI RAO RECEIVED LITTLE SUPPORT FOR HIS AMBITIOUS PLANS. HIS RIVALS TRIED TO INFLUENCE SHAHU.

MAHARAJ, I'M NOT IN FAVOUR OF ANY DESPERATE ACTION AGAINST THE MUGHAL EMPIRE.

AND WE'VE TO ABIDE BY THE PROMISE WE GAVE TO THE SYED BROTHERS.

KING SHAHU RECEIVED A LETTER FROM BAJI RAO. HE WAS IMPRESSED.

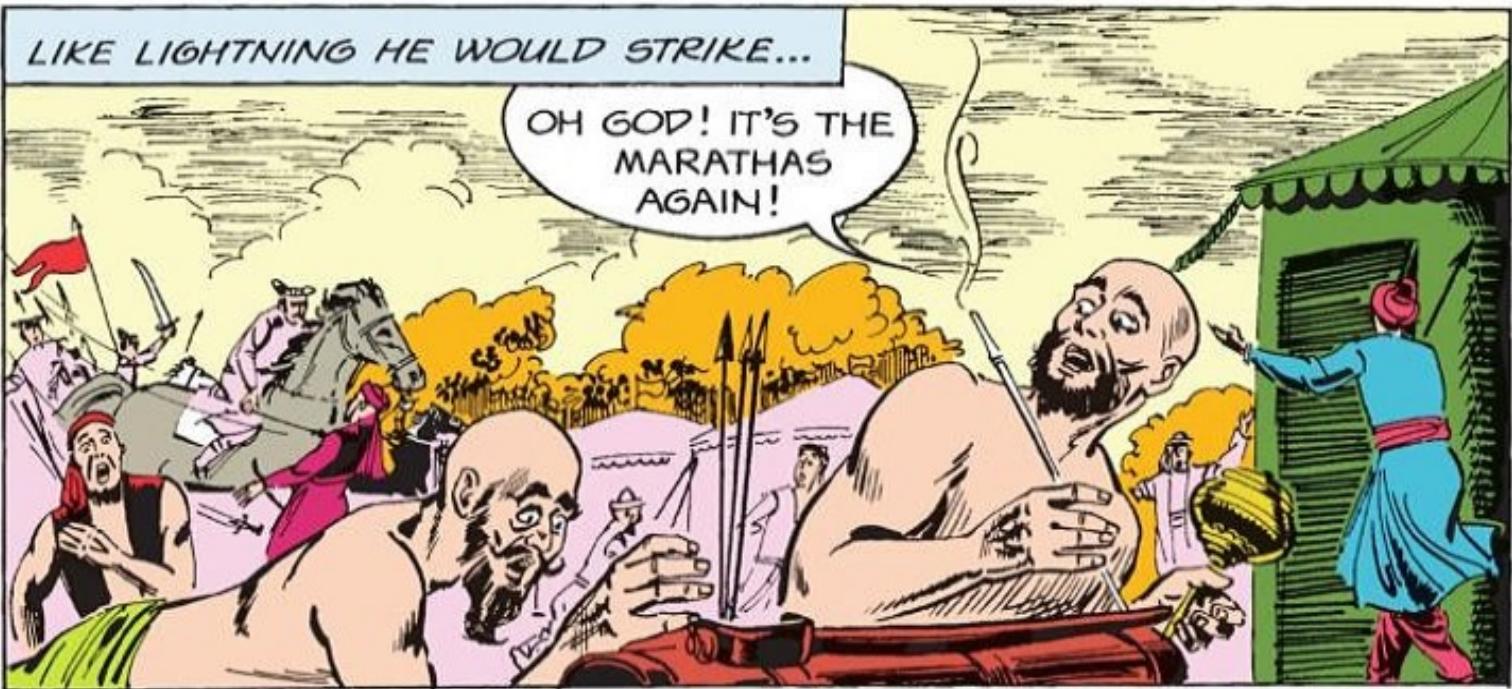
MAHARAJ, ALL I NEED IS YOUR BLESSING IN MY EFFORT TO FULFIL THE DREAM OF YOUR NOBLE GRANDFATHER.

FOR FIVE YEARS, BAJI RAO CONTINUED NIBBLING AT THE DOMAINS OF THE MUGHAL EMPEROR AND OF HIS SUBEDARS, PARTICULARLY THOSE UNDER THE NIZAM.



LIKE LIGHTNING HE WOULD STRIKE...

OH GOD! IT'S THE MARATHAS AGAIN!



...AND VANISH AS QUICKLY.

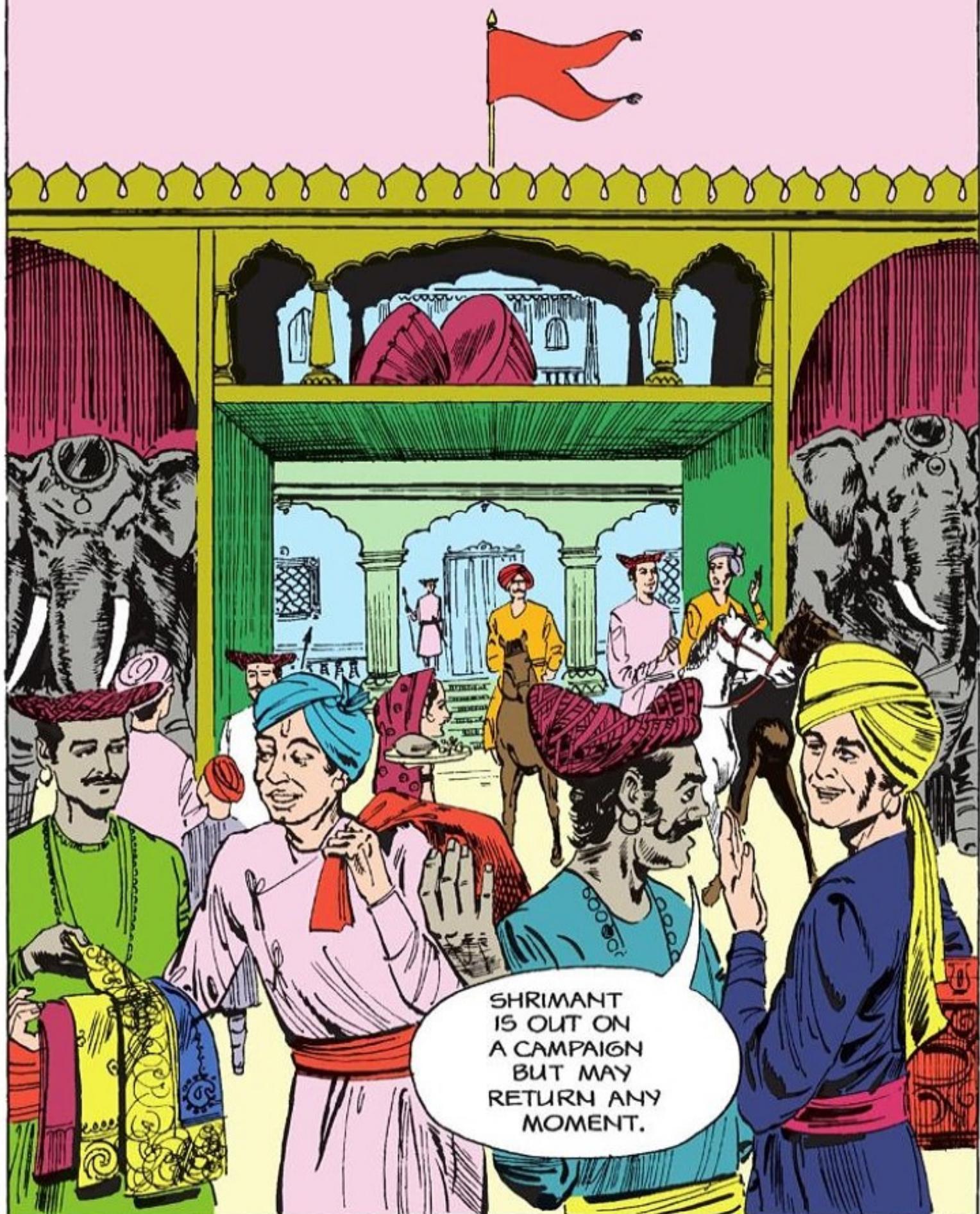
THEY'RE GONE! YOUR HELP COMES LATE!



SOON, HIS ARMIES HAD CONTROL OVER A VAST TERRITORY EXTENDING FROM BUNDELKHAND TO GUARAT.



THE PESHWA NOW BECAME THE VIRTUAL RULER OF THE MARATHAS, AND POONA WHERE HE LIVED, BECAME THE CENTRE OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY. BUT HE RULED IN THE NAME OF HIS MASTER AT SATARA.

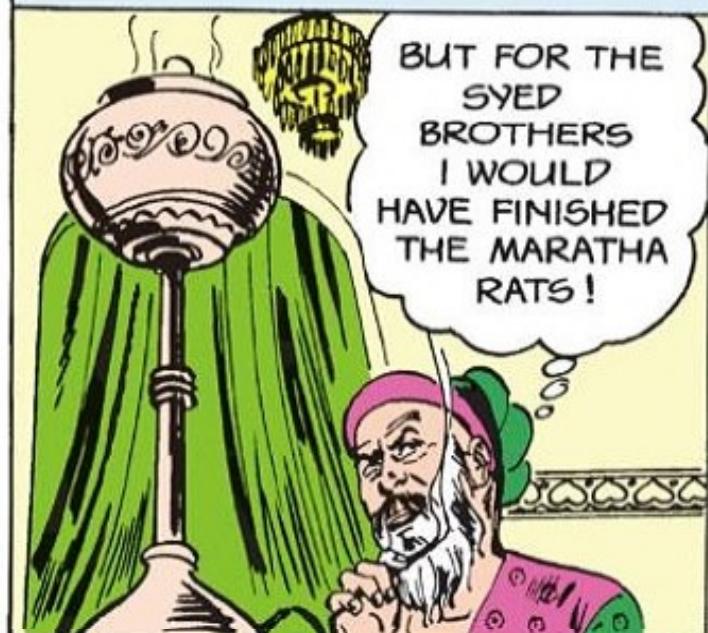


BAJI RAO'S CAMPAIGNS BROUGHT MUCH WEALTH TO THE MARATHA KINGDOM. BUT DABHADE AND THE PRATINIDHI ALWAYS TRIED TO MALIGN HIM.



THUS, SLOWLY BAJI RAO GAINED THE CONFIDENCE OF SHAHU.

MEANWHILE, THE NIZAM HAD HIS OWN PLANS TO SUPPRESS BAJI RAO.



SHRIMANT, THE NIZAM HAS DEFEATED SYED'S NEPHEW.

SYED HUSSAIN ALI HAS BEEN MURDERED!

I KNOW.



NOW THE NIZAM WILL HAVE UNRESTRAINED POWER.

HOLKAR, EVERY DARK CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN, SHRIMANT?

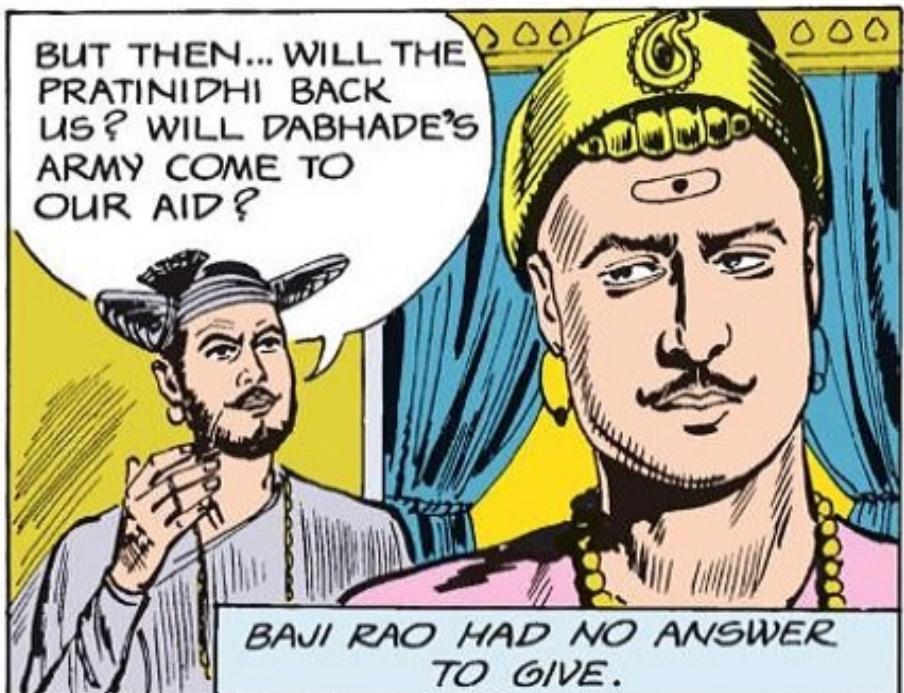
THE NIZAM MAY NOW BREAK THE CONTRACT THE EMPEROR MADE WITH MY FATHER...



BUT THEN... WILL THE PRATINIDHI BACK US? WILL DABHADE'S ARMY COME TO OUR AID?

BAJI RAO HAD NO ANSWER TO GIVE.

...AND THAT WILL GIVE US AN EXCUSE TO MAKE A MAJOR ASSAULT ON THE EMPIRE!

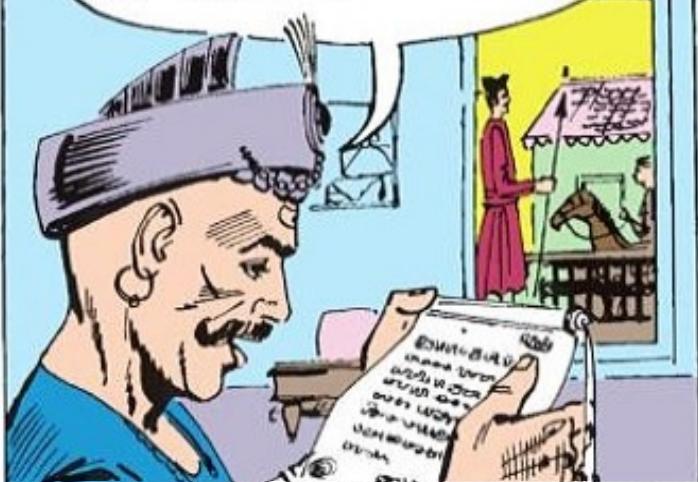


AFTER BECOMING THE VAZIR OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE IN 1722, THE NIZAM ACQUIRED FURTHER POWER. THEN, AGAINST THE WISHES OF THE EMPEROR HE CAME SOUTH.

BAJI RAO!...
MY MAIN ENEMY
IS BAJI RAO!
I MUST TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF THE
INTERNECINE
QUARRELS OF
THE MARATHAS
TO FINISH
HIM.

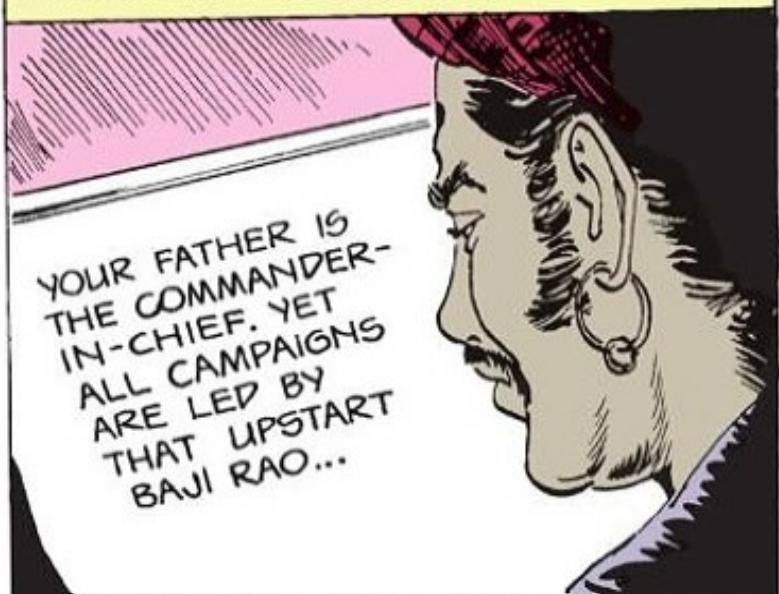
SOON THE PRATINIDHI HAD AN OFFER.

THE NIZAM HAS OFFERED ME THE JAGIR OF BERAR...



TRIMBAKRAO DABHADE WAS THE NEXT TARGET.

YOUR FATHER IS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF. YET ALL CAMPAIGNS ARE LED BY THAT UPSTART BAJI RAO...



THE NIZAM MARCHED TOWARDS POONA.

EVEN SHAHU'S COUSIN SAMBHAJI IS FIGHTING ON MY SIDE. THIS TIME IT WILL BE THE END OF BAJI RAO!



THE NEWS REACHED BAJI RAO.

SHRIMANT,
THE NIZAM
IS HEADING
FOR POONA
WITH A BIG
ARMY.

WE'LL
MEET HIM
HALF-
WAY.

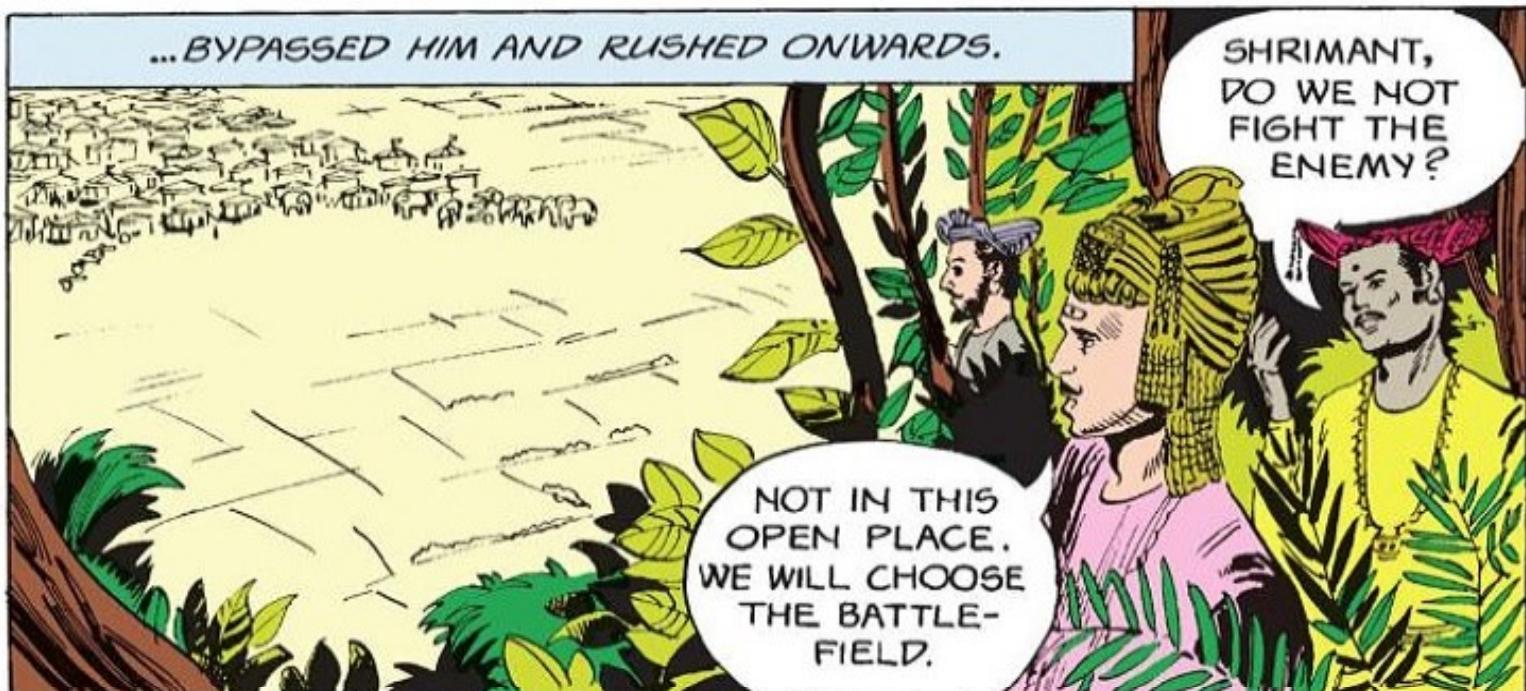
WITH LIGHTNING SPEED BAJI RAO AND HIS MEN MOVED TOWARDS BURHANPUR, WHERE THE NIZAM WAS CAMPING, BUT...



...BYPASSED HIM AND RUSHED ONWARDS.

SHRIMANT,
DO WE NOT
FIGHT THE
ENEMY?

NOT IN THIS
OPEN PLACE.
WE WILL CHOOSE
THE BATTLE-
FIELD.



FINALLY, AT PALKHED THEY CAME TO A HALT READY TO FACE THE NIZAM. BUT THERE WAS DISTURBING NEWS.

SHRIMANT, INSTEAD OF COMING TO OUR AID, DABHADE IS RAIDING YOUR OWN MALWA.

OUR OWN TERRITORY?
...WELL...



SHOULDN'T WE SEND SOME TROOPS TO FIGHT HIM?

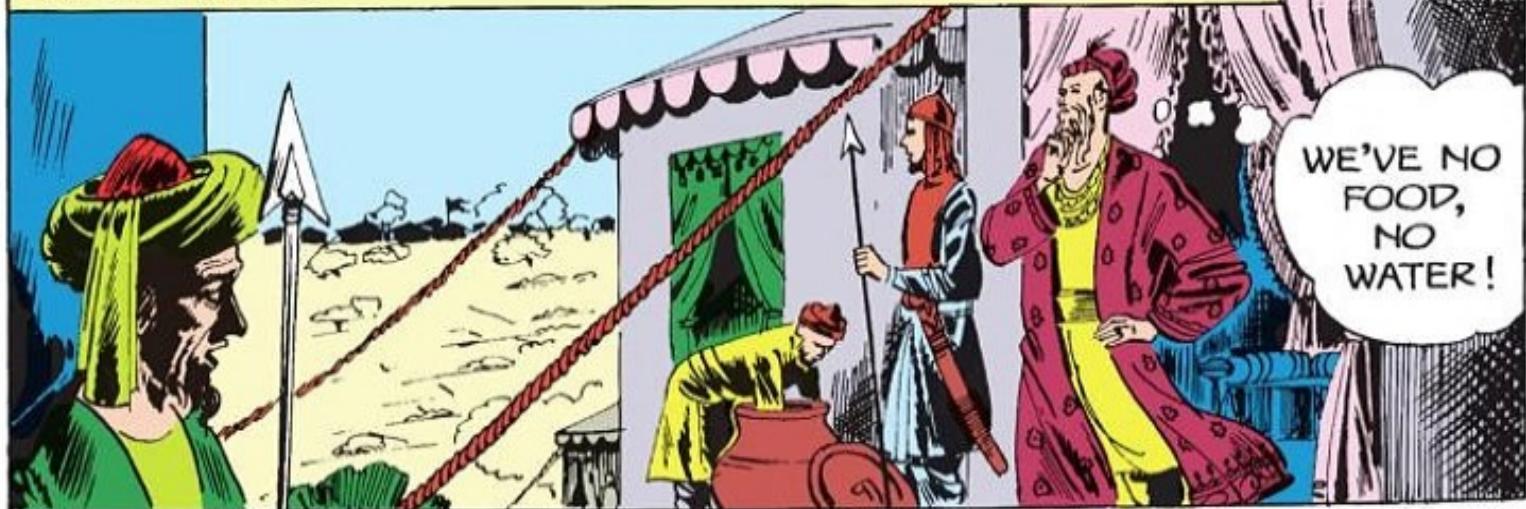
NO.
THIS IS NO TIME TO FIGHT AMONG OURSELVES.

THE PRATINIDHI TOO, WHOM SHAHU HAD SENT WITH REINFORCEMENTS, WAS IN NO MOOD TO HELP BAJI RAO.

LET THE NIZAM FINISH BAJI RAO.
...THEN I'LL RISE IN PROMINENCE IN KING SHAHU'S COURT.



DETERMINED TO GET OVER THESE ODDS, BAJI RAO LAID SIEGE TO THE NIZAM'S CAMP CUTTING OFF ALL SUPPLIES! THE NIZAM BECAME DESPERATE...



IN THE END THE NIZAM HAD TO SURRENDER. HE WENT TO MEET BAJI RAO.



BAJI RAO WAS FIRM IN HIS DEMANDS.

OUR RIGHTS TO THE REVENUE IN THE DECCAN MUST CONTINUE.



FOR THIS PURPOSE,
ALL *CHOWKIES
THERE MUST BE
CEDED TO US.

AS YOU
PLEASE.

LATER, THE PESHWA VISITED THE OLD MAN. THE NIZAM WAS FULL OF ADMIRATION.

I FIND THAT YOU ARE WITHOUT YOUR FAMOUS BODYGUARDS - SHINDE AND HOLKAR.

I COULD
KILL
YOU HERE
AND NOW.

SHINDE AND
HOLKAR ARE ALWAYS
WITH ME - SEE ?

THE TWO ATTENDANTS OF
BAJI RAO HAD THROWN OFF
THEIR CLOAKS.

YOU'RE TRULY
CLEVER!
...EK BAJI AUR
SAB PAJI!*

*EXCEPT BAJI ALL OTHERS ARE ROGUES.

SIR, YOU'RE GREAT!
...EK NIZAM AUR
SAB HAZAM!**

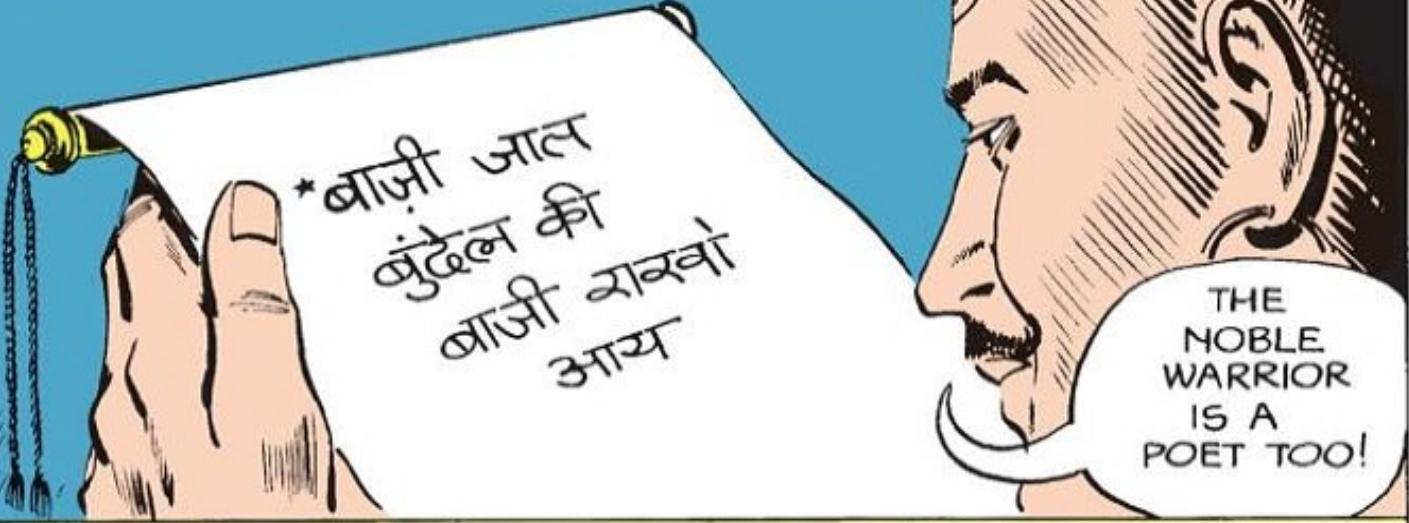
**NIZAM IS UNIQUE.
THE REST? MERE
BARBERS!

THE NIZAM HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO HIS KNEES. BAJI RAO NOW TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE NORTH.

THIS IS FROM
CHMATRASAL OF
BUNDELKHAND.

"HE'S IN A FIX... UNDER FIRE FROM
A MUGHAL MARAUDER—
BANGAS OF ALLAHABAD."





* THE APPEAL IN CATCHING VERSE WHICH LATER BECAME A LEGEND, MEANS: BUNDELKHAND IS LOSING FACE. SAVE OUR HONOUR, OH BAJI!

TEMPESTUOUS AS EVER, BAJI RAO RUSHED ON.

TO BUNDELKHAND
WE GO!

ANOTHER
WHIRLWIND
CAMPAIGN.

WITH PARCHED RICE
AND GRAM TO EAT.



HE REACHED MAHUA TO MEET CHHATRASAL.

BAJI, I DIDN'T
EXPECT YOU
SO SOON!

IT'S MY
FILIAL
DUTY.



A DETAILED CAMPAIGN WAS CHALKED OUT, AND THE COMBINED FORCES OF BAJI RAO AND CHHATRASAL SURROUNDED JAIPUR, WHERE BANGAS WAS CAMPING.

HAR HAR MAHADEO !



AFTER A FURIOUS BATTLE WHICH WENT ON FOR DAYS, TRUMPETS OF VICTORY SOUNDED.

BANGAS HAS SURRENDERED!

HAIL BAJI RAO!



CHHATRASAL WAS SO HAPPY, HE IMMEDIATELY HELD A DURBAR TO HONOUR BAJI RAO.

MY PEOPLE!
I PROUDLY PRESENT
TO YOU MY THIRD
SON - BAJI RAO!

BAJI RAO
KI JAI!



HE SHOWERED WEALTH ON THE PESHWA AND OFFERED HIM VAST TERRITORIES.

KALPI, SAGAR, JHANSI, AND GADKOTE ARE YOURS.

I AM OVERWHELMED. HOW CAN I ACCEPT ALL THIS?

YOU MUST. AND MASTANI TOO. I KNOW YOUR LITTLE SECRET.



MASTANI WAS CHHATRASAL'S ADOPTED DAUGHTER. BAJI RAO HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HER!

THE FAREWELL WAS A TOUCHING ONE.

BUNDELKHAND SHALL ALWAYS REMAIN INDEBTED TO YOU.

THE GIFTS OF BUNDELKHAND SHALL FOR EVER REMAIN DEAR TO ME.

BEFORE THE PESHWA'S RETURN TO POONA, KHANDERO DABHADE HAD DIED AND HIS SON TRIMBAKRAO WAS APPOINTED THE NEW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF...IN NAME OF COURSE!

THE NEW COMMANDER IS CREATING TROUBLE IN GUJARAT.

REBEL SARDARS HAVE JOINED FORCES WITH HIM.



ONCE AGAIN, BAJI RAO RODE OUT OF POONA...THIS TIME NOT IN A JUBILANT MOOD.

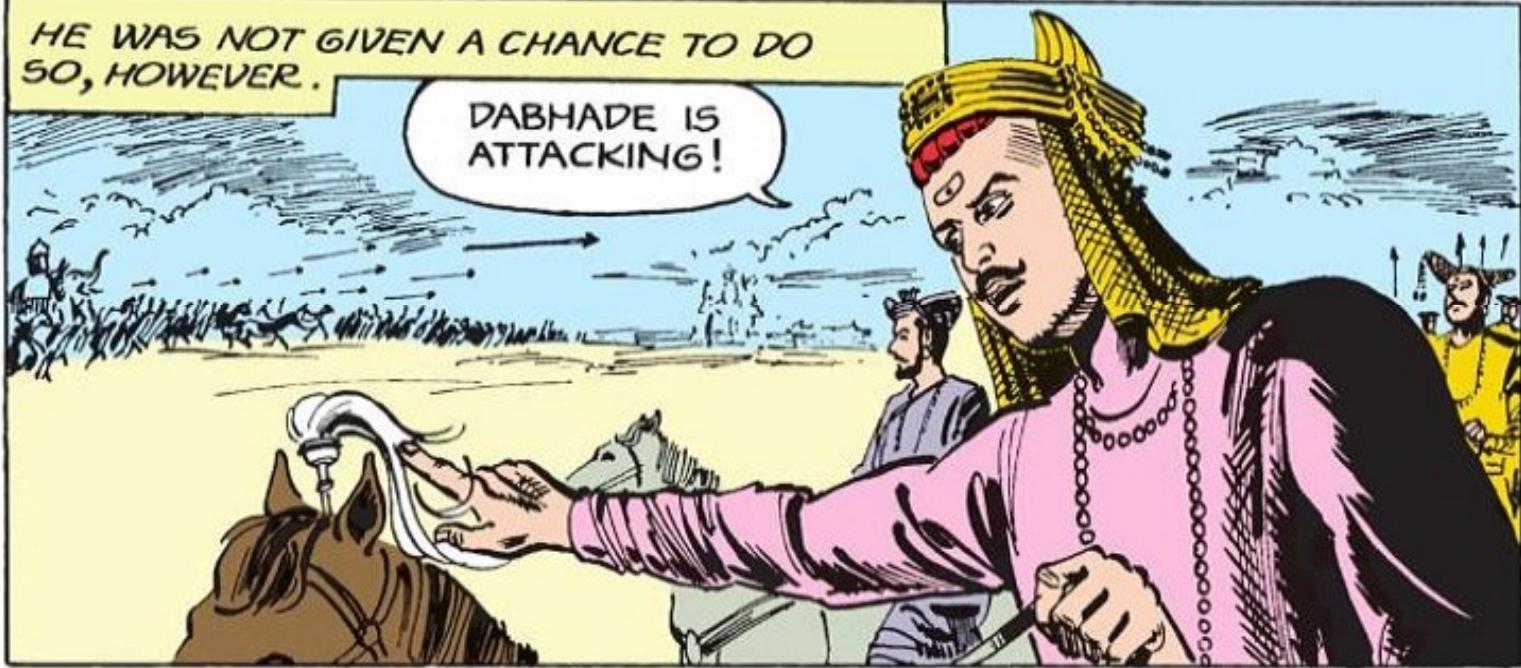
YOU LOOK SAD, SHRIMANT.

IT IS SAD TO HAVE TO RAISE ONE'S HAND AGAINST ONE'S OWN MEN. I'LL TRY PERSUASION FIRST.



HE WAS NOT GIVEN A CHANCE TO DO SO, HOWEVER.

DABHADE IS ATTACKING!

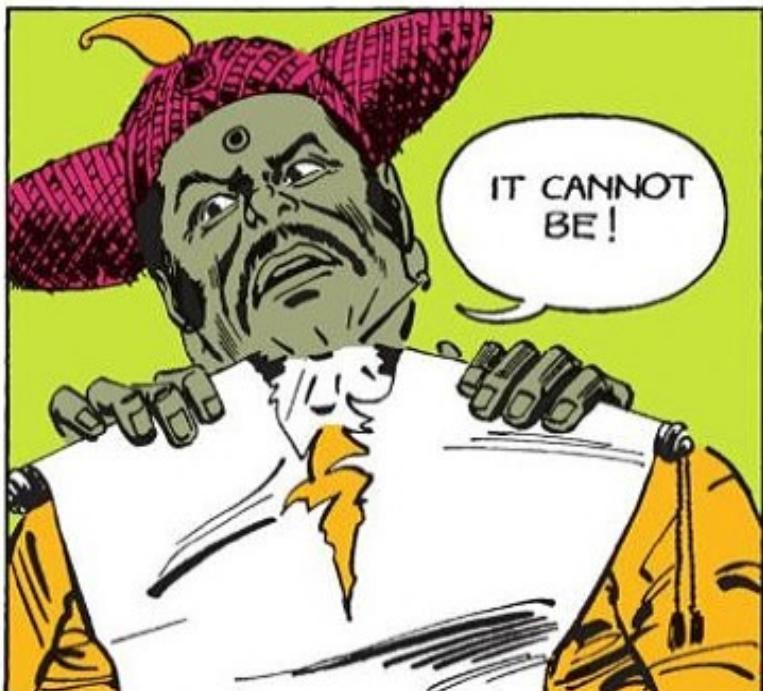


BAJI RAO SENT A MESSENGER...

HE SAYS, SAVE YOUR SWORD FOR OUR ENEMIES. I'LL COME AND MEET YOU RESPECTFULLY.



IT CANNOT BE!



BAU RAO WAS FORCED TO FIGHT.

DO NOT HURT DABHADE!



BUT A BULLET HAD ALREADY STRUCK HIM.

THE SENAPATI HAS FALLEN!



BAU RAO STOPPED ALL FIGHTING IMMEDIATELY. HE WENT UP TO THE DEAD MAN.



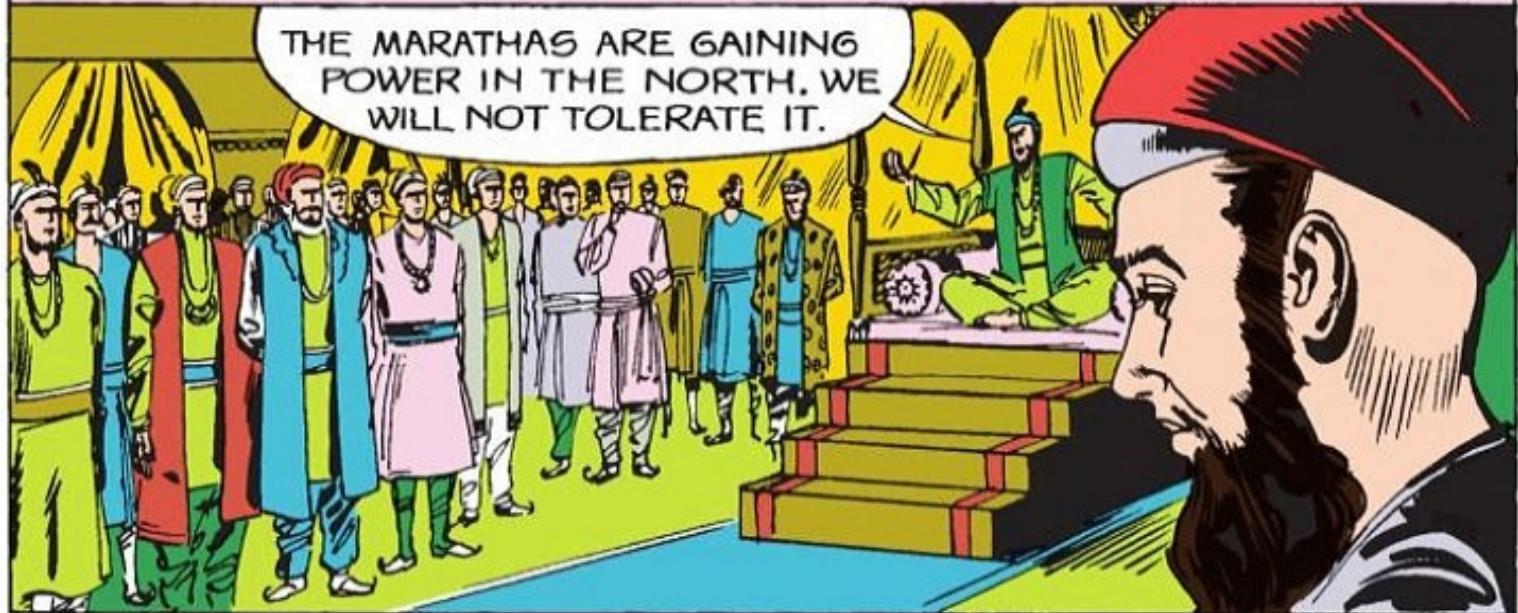
HE CONSOLED DABHADE'S MOTHER.

I HAD NO CHOICE, MOTHER! LOOK ON ME AS YOUR SON, HENCEFORTH.



MEANWHILE AT THE COURT OF THE MUGHAL EMPEROR...

THE MARATHAS ARE GAINING POWER IN THE NORTH. WE WILL NOT TOLERATE IT.

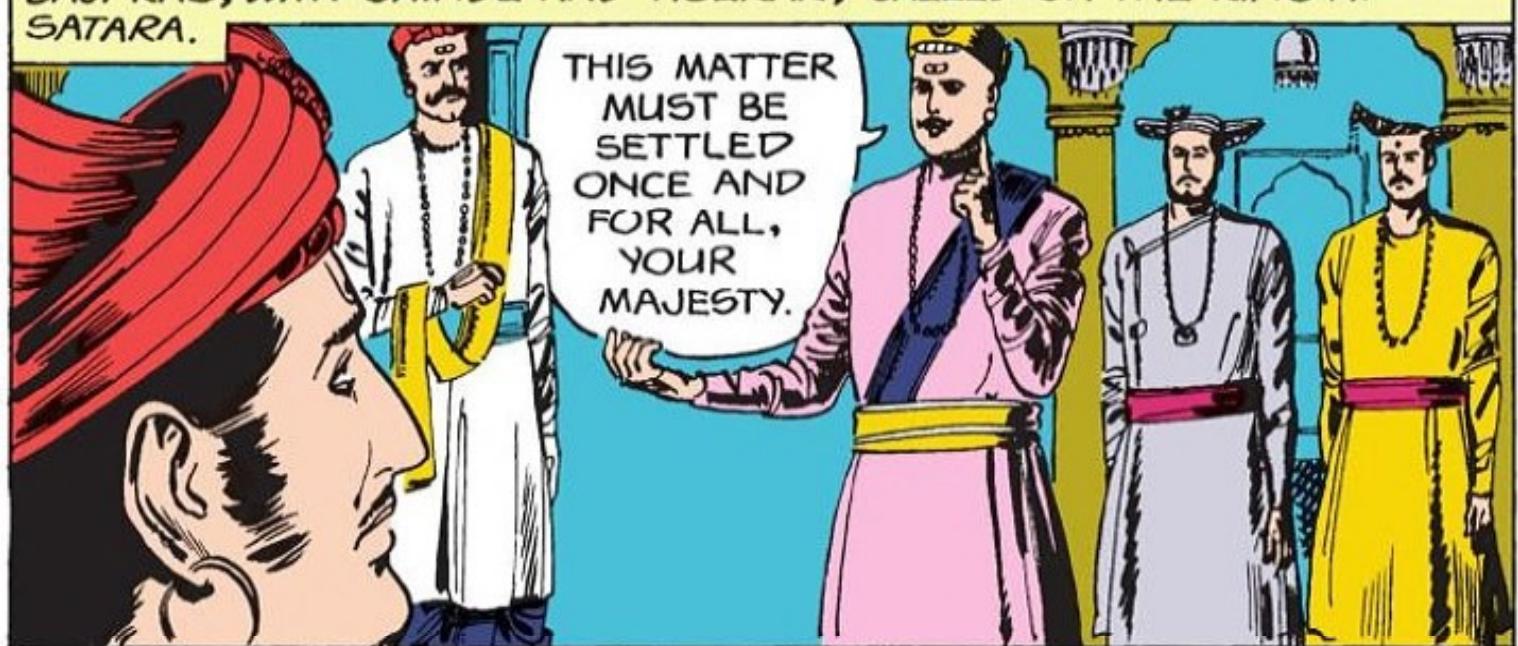


THE FEEBLE EMPEROR STARTED HIS CAMPAIGN TO CRUSH THE RISING MARATHA POWER.



BAJI RAO, WITH SHINDE AND HOLKAR, CALLED ON THE KING AT SATARA.

THIS MATTER MUST BE SETTLED ONCE AND FOR ALL, YOUR MAJESTY.



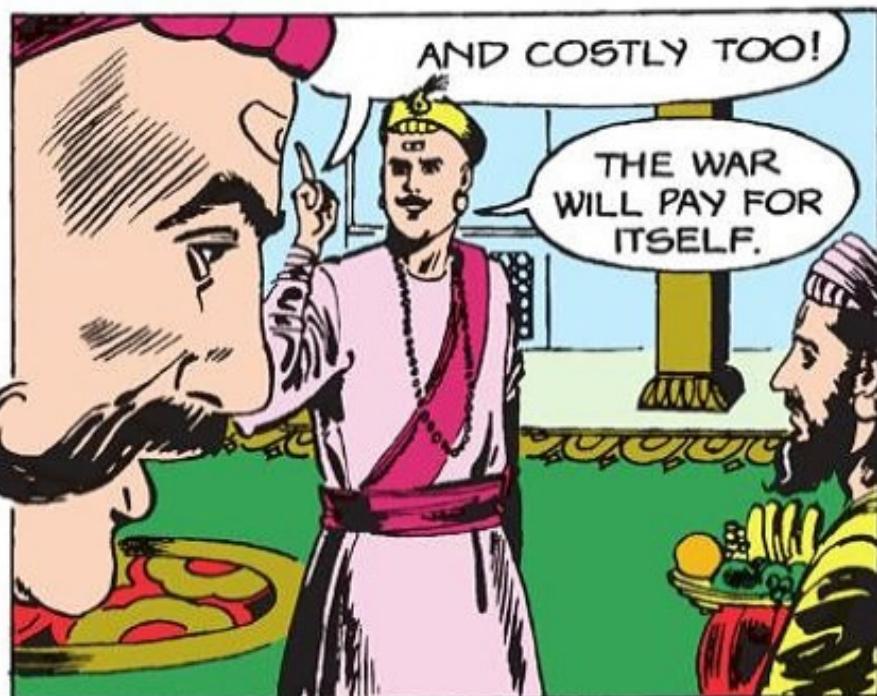
PERMIT
US TO
ATTACK
DELHI.

IT WILL BE A
LONG BUT
DECISIVE WAR.



AND COSTLY TOO!

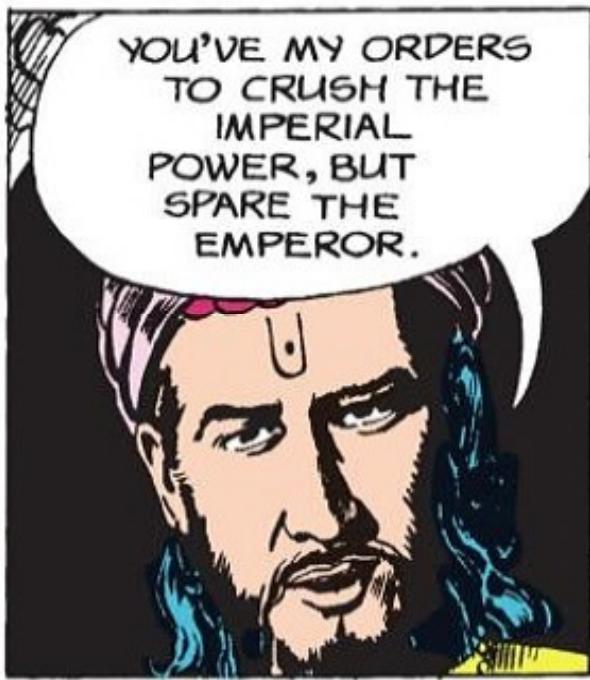
THE WAR
WILL PAY FOR
ITSELF.



I'M SURE YOU'LL DO
THE RIGHT THING.



YOU'VE MY ORDERS
TO CRUSH THE
IMPERIAL
POWER, BUT
SPARE THE
EMPEROR.



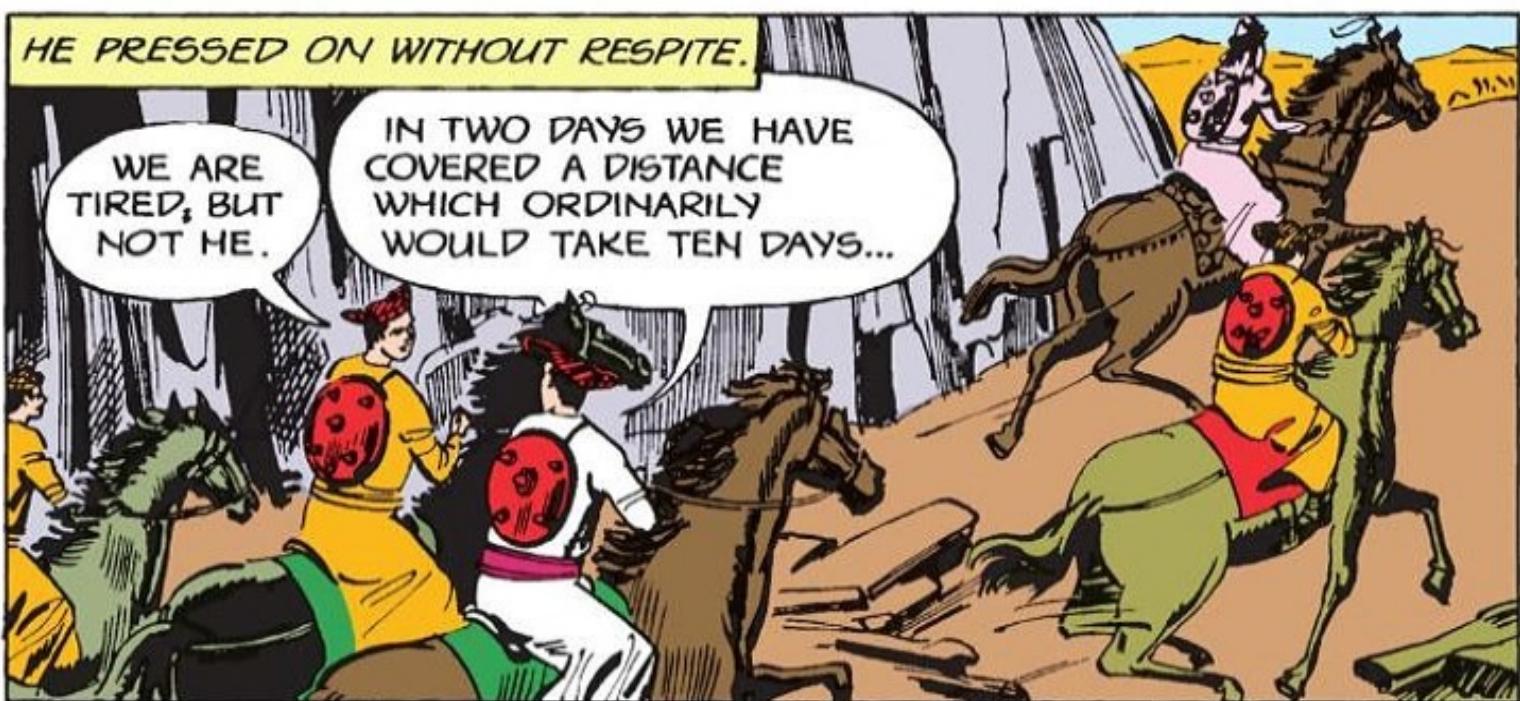
BAJI RAO MADE A SPIRITED DASH FROM POONA,
WITH AN ARMY 80,000 STRONG.



HE PRESSED ON WITHOUT RESPITE.

WE ARE TIRED, BUT NOT HE.

IN TWO DAYS WE HAVE COVERED A DISTANCE WHICH ORDINARILY WOULD TAKE TEN DAYS...



THE MOVEMENTS OF THE MUGHALS WERE SLOW AND SLOTHFUL.

GET MOVING.
BAJI RAO IS ON HIS WAY.

WHERE'S MY HUKKAH?



AT BHELSA, SHINDE AND HOLKAR JOINED HIM.

NOW FOR THE FINAL BLOW!



THE CHAMBAL WAS CROSSED... ENEMY AFTER ENEMY WAS DEFEATED...



AND THE TRIUMPHANT MARATHAS MARCHED TOWARDS DELHI.

AVOID THOSE BLOATED KHANS
AMBUSHING AROUND. THROW
DUST IN THEIR EYES!



IN MAY 1737, BAJI RAO REACHED THE OUTSKIRTS OF DELHI.

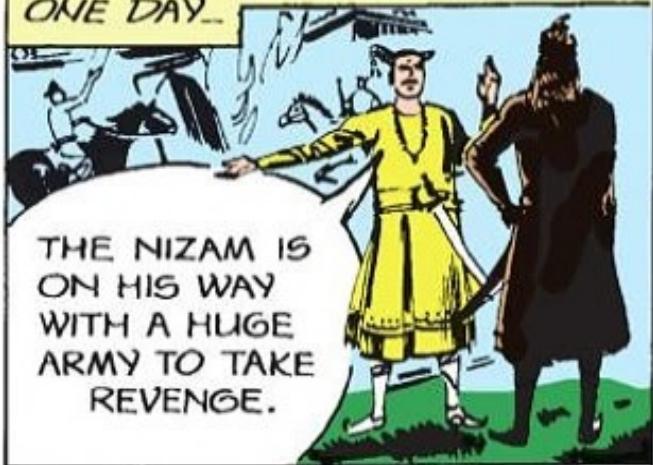
DRIVE THE
MARATHAS AWAY.



THE MUGHAL FORCES WERE TOTALLY ROUTED IN THE BATTLE THAT
WAS FOUGHT OUTSIDE DELHI.



BAJI RAO MOVED SOUTHWARD BUT HIS TROUBLES WERE NOT OVER. THE NIZAM HAD REACHED DELHI AND WAS MUSTERING FORCES. ONE DAY...



THE NIZAM MOVED SOUTHWARD AND CAMPED IN THE FORTRESS OF BHOPAL.



UNDER BAJI RAO'S COMMAND, THE BATTLE THAT FOLLOWED ENDED IN A SPLENDID VICTORY FOR THE MARATHAS.



SHRIMANT, TODAY YOU'RE AT THE ZENITH OF YOUR GLORY. YOU COULD EASILY DETHRONE THE EMPEROR.

THAT'S ONE THING I WON'T DO, HOLKAR. OUR MAHARAJ WOULD NOT LIKE IT.



BAJI RAO MADE A TRIUMPHANT RETURN TO POONA.



FAR AHEAD OF HIS TIMES, BAJI RAO WAS DISLIKED BY MANY. BUT HIS PATRIOTISM WAS SO GREAT, NONE DARED CRITICIZE HIM OPENLY. HISTORIANS COMPARE THIS 'EXCELLENT PRINCE' TO NAPOLEON; AND IF WALLS COULD SPEAK, SHANWAR WADA, THE HUGE AND RUGGED PALACE, HE BUILT IN POONA, WOULD TELL MANY A TALE OF STRENGTH AND VALOUR.

WHICH OF THE ACKS HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

EPICS AND MYTHOLOGY				
<i>Best known stories from the Epics and the Puranas</i>				
Abhimanyu	Tales Of Shiva	Swami Chinmayananda	The Mouse Merchant	Baladitya And Yashodharma
Agastya	Tales Of Vishnu	Swami Pranavananda	True Friends	Balban
Andhaka	Tales Of Yudhishtira	Tales Of Sai Baba	Kanwal And Kehar	Banda Bahadur
Aniruddha	Tapati	Tansen	Kesari The Flying Thief	Bappa Rawal
Aruni And Uttanka	Thanjavur	Tulsidas	King Kusha	Beni Madho And Pir Ali
Ashwini Kumars	The Churning Of The Ocean	Vidyasagar	Manduka	Bhagat Singh
Ayyappan	The Gita	Vivekananda	PANCHATANTRA TALES	Bidhi Chand
Bahubali	The Golden Mongoose	Zarathushtra	Crows And Owls	Bimbisara
Bhanumati	The King In A Parrot's Body	INDIAN CLASSICS		Chand Bibi
Bheema And Hanuman	The Lord Of Lanka	<i>Enchanting tales from Indian literature</i>		Chandra Shekhar Azad
Bheeshma	The Pandava Princes	Ananda Math	The Elephant	Chandragupta Maurya
Chandrasaha	The Pandavas In Hiding	Ancestors Of Rama	The Brahmin And	Chennamma Of Keladi
Dasharatha	The Parijata Tree	Devi Choudhurani	The Goat	Dara Shukoh And
Dhruba And Ashtavakra	The Sons Of Rama	Durgesh Nandini	The Dullard	Aurangzeb
Draupadi	The Syamantaka Gem	Kadambari	The Greedy Mother-in-law	Durgadas
Drona	Tirupati	Kannagi	The Jackal And	Ellora Caves
Elephanta	Tripura	Kapala Kundala	The Wardrum	Hakka And Bukka
Gandhari	Uloopi	Kumanan	Raman Of Tenali	Hari Singh Nalwa
Ganesha	Vaishno Devi	Maarthaanda Varma	Raman The Matchless Wit	Harsha
Ganesha And The Moon	Vall	Malavika	Sahasramalla	Hemu
Ganga	Vishwamitra	Manonmani	Sakshi Gopal	Humayun
Garuda	Yayati	Prince Jivaka	Satwant Kaur	Jahangir
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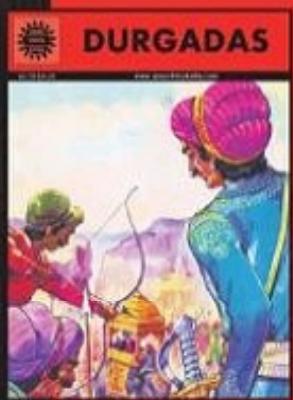
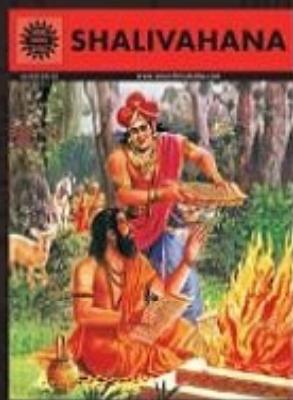
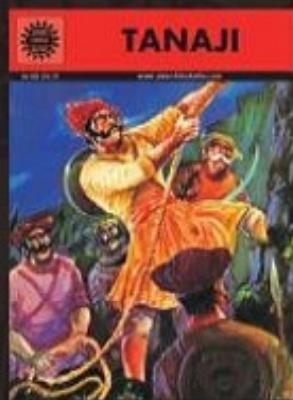
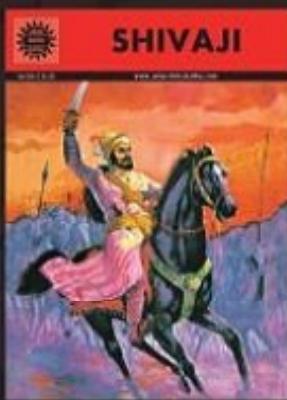


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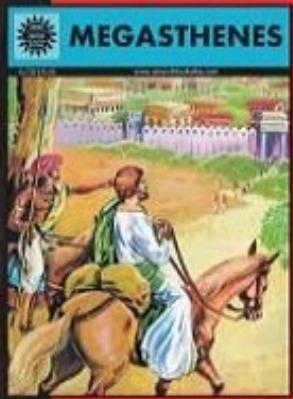
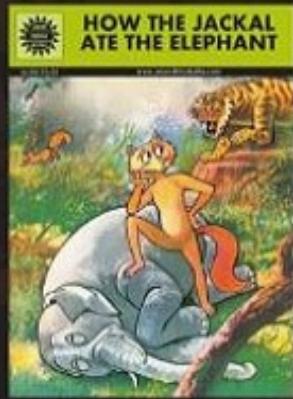
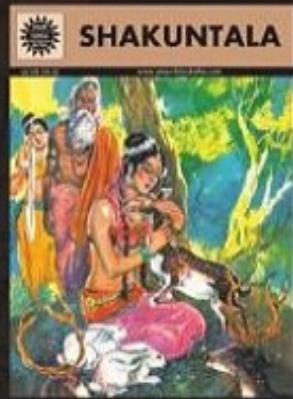
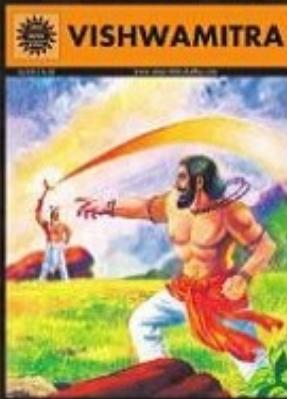
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